

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01777 111636Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 ACDA-12 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /067 W
-----083244 111640Z /53

O R 111538Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5622
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1777

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, MILI, NO, SV
SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN REPLY TO BREZHNEV LETTER ON ERW/RB

1. THE NORWEGIAN PRIME MINISTER DELIVERED HIS RESPONSE TO
BREZHNEV'S JANUARY 5 LETTER PERSONALLY TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR
ON APRIL 10. UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT OF THE LETTER IS
AS FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN TEXT: HONORED PRESIDENT,

IN REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 5 1978 I WILL ASSURE
YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT BOTH THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE
NORWEGIAN PEOPLE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE DANGERS INVOLVED
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IN A CONTINUATION OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.
YOUR DEMAND FOR FULL CANDOR IN THESE MATTERS I AGREE WITH
FULLY, AND PERSONALLY I HOPE THAT MORE AND MORE DATA CAN BE
RELEASED ABOUT MILITARY AFFAIRS BOTH IN THE EAST AND WEST, AND
DATA BOTH ON NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, SO THAT WE CAN
HAVE AN OPEN AND COMPREHENSIVE DEBATE ON THESE MATTERS WHICH ARE
SO IMPORTANT FOR MANKIND.

A NUCLEAR WAR WOULD CLAIM VICTIMS AND CAUSE SUFFERING ON A SCALE WHICH ONLY THE STATE LEADERS WHO HAVE THE FULL INSIGHT IN THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY COULD COMPREHEND. THIS PLACES UPON THE LEADING NUCLEAR POWERS IN THE WORLD, AND FIRST AND FOREMOST THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES, A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO STOP FURTHER REARMAMENT.

THEREFORE MY GOVERNMENT GREETES WITH SATISFACTION PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION TO POSTPONE THE QUESTION OF PRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON WEAPON. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THIS DECISION WILL CONTRIBUTE TO CREATE THE ATMOSPHERE WHICH IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE REAL PROGRESS IN THE WORK ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT.

MY GOVERNMENT REGARDS IT AS A CENTRAL TASK TO CONTRIBUTE, TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY, TO THE EFFORTS TO STOP THE ARMS RACE BOTH IN THE NUCLEAR AND THE CONVENTIONAL AREA. THIS POLICY HAS BROAD SUPPORT IN THE NORWEGIAN NATION. RESPECTFULLY, ODVAR NORDLI. END TEXT.

3. THE GON'S RESPONSE RECEIVED BROAD MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE MAJOR NORWEGIAN PRESS WHICH LINKED NORDLI'S ANSWER TO GENERAL NORWEGIAN SATISFACTION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSTPONEMENT. THE MAJOR OSLO MAJOR OSLO DAILY "AFTENPOSTEN" QUOTED EXTENSIVELY FROM PRIME MINISTER NORDLI'S LETTER AND CONCLUDED WITH THE WISH THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO CREATING THE ATMOSPHERE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE REAL PROGRESS INV ARMS CONTROL.

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4. LEIF MEVIK, DIRECTOR OF THE MFA'S OFFICE OF POLICY PLANNING, COMMENTED TO EMBOFFS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND AND PRIME MINISTER NORDLI HAD DELAYED THE RESPONSE UNTIL THEY HAD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO LINK IT TO; IN THIS CASE THE APRIL 4 PARLIAMENTARY ARMS CONTROL DEBATE WHICH REFLECTED A BROAD POLITICAL CONSENSUS AGAINST PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE ER/RB. HE SAID THAT THE LETTER HAD GONE THROUGH A NUMBER OF DRAFTS, A RECENT ONE OF WHICH HAD CONCLUDED WITH A MORE BALANCED STATEMENT THAN DID THE FINAL VERSION.

5. COMMENT: THE TONE OF THE NORDLI RESPONSE ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE POLITICAL FEELING IN NORWAY AGAINST PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE ER/RB. NEITHER THE POSITION OR THE RESPONSE ARE SURPRISING CONSIDERING NORWAY'S LONGSTANDING TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS (WHICH LED TO THE POST-WAR PROHIBITION OF THEIR STATIONING ON NORWEGIAN SOIL) AND NORWAY'S TRADITIONAL FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES EMPHASIZING ARMS CONTROL AS AN INHERENT ELEMENT OF SECURITY POLICY. THERE IS SOME CONCERN PARTICULARLY AMONG THE MORE CONSERVATIVE PARLIAMENTARIANS IN NORWAY AND AMONG MANY OF THE MORE INFORMED SECURITY SPECIALISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT THAT NONPRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT WOULD BE BASED ON EMOTIONAL OUTPOURINGS RATHER THAN ON CAREFUL

REFLECTION AND THAT THE MILITARY NEED FOR SUCH A WEAPON
WAS LEFT UNFILLED.
LERNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, NUCLEAR WEAPONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978OSLO01777
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780155-0896
Format: TEL
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780470/aaaachom.tel
Line Count: 119
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f09af0b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3009761
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NORWEGIAN REPLY TO BREZHNEV LETTER ON ERW/RB
TAGS: PARM, MILI, NO, SV, UR, (NORDLI, ODVAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f09af0b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014